

of Eastern and Western Europe. In Russia and the Danubian countries they are 40 per mille or over, in the United Kingdom the birth-rate is only 24. in France it hardly exceeds 20. But this difference is of quite recent date. At the beginning of the nineteenth century the French birth-rate was 34 : forty years ago that of the United Kingdom was 35. The birth-rate of Germany is now as high as was that of France a century ago ; but it is falling.

We might be tempted to ascribe this general decline of births in the most progressive countries of Europe to some influences connected with the density of population. But it may be imputed with more probability to artificial causes, noticeable amongst which is the postponement of marriage.

In India with a very dense population the birth-rate approaches 40 per mille : marriage is there generally contracted at the age of puberty. In the United States where we should imagine that a rapid development of material resources would be accompanied by a rapid growth of population.

birth-rates are no higher than in the United Kingdom. In the Anglo-Saxon colonies of Australasia they approximate to 30 per mille : but except in Tasmania they have fallen very considerably during the last 20 years. These facts do not indicate any relationship between fertility and environment; indeed amongst the poorest classes of our large cities the birth-

rate is even now as high as 40 per mille and families would increase with great rapidity were it not that deaths are abnormally numerous. The conditions of town life are so far removed from those of nature that one would be inclined to suspect that they were unfavourable to fertility. There is an idea that London families die out in two or three generations. The population of London is main-